REMARKS

Claims 1, 5, 6, and 10 remain in the application with claims 1 and 10 having been amended hereby.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested of the rejection of the claims under 35 USC 103, as being unpatentable over Van Steenbrugge '030 in view Van Steenbrugge '062.

As previously noted, this invention is based upon the recognition that when compressing audio data there are small portions created in between the compressed digital words that do not contain any data at all. That is, there are short portions of zeros that exist between the successive compressed audio data words. If it is possible to detect the zeros, then it can be determined whether or not compression has taken place and thus decoding is to take place. Thus, when two different kinds of data are possible, that is, compressed and uncompressed, upon making the zero data detection for these short periods of time it is possible to automatically switch the kind of decoding that is to be performed. Moreover, such automatic switching of the kind of decoding is based upon a sync signal detected in the supplied audio data signal.

Amended claims 1 and 10 both reflect these features of the present invention discussed above.

Van Steenbrugge '030 relates to an apparatus for reproducing a digital audio signal that can perform two different kinds of decoding. The kind of decoding that is employed is determined in response to a selection made by the

user via the input keys. See column 3, the paragraph commencing at line 26 of Van Steenbrugge '030.

The Office Action states that Van Steenbrugge '030 at column 4 lines 50-53 discloses that the decoding switching is incurred based upon a sync signal of the supplied audio. Nevertheless, it is respectfully submitted that what is being described there, and shown in Fig. 2(c) is not an audio data sync signal but rather a detection of a bit in the channel status signal that changes from 0 to 1. This is not an audio sync signal, and it will be noted that the frequency of this bit occurrence is roughly 500Hz.

Van Steenbrugge '062 is cited for showing a decoder that detects the presence of data such as audio data, null data, and pause data. It is supposed that detecting the null data is the same as detecting the zeros in between the compressed data words of the present invention.

It is respectfully submitted that this is not the same as detecting zeros and, as stated in Van Steenbrugge '062, what is being disclosed is recurrently packaging audio samples in burst payloads and packaging the burst payloads as user data in specific format frames which include pause bursts that signal the absence of audio for all associated channels. This is not detecting zeros between compressed data words as in the presently claimed invention and, in fact, simply detects whether or not there is any data at all in that channel.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that even combining Van Steenbrugge '062 with Van Steenbrugge '030 that

the present invention is not rendered obvious, because the combination of the references does not result in the structure and method steps provided by the present invention.

Accordingly, by reason of the amendments made to the claims hereby, as well as the above remarks, it is respectfully submitted that a method and apparatus for processing audio signal data, as taught by the present invention and as recited in the amended claims, is neither shown nor suggested in the cited references alone or in combination.

Favorable reconsideration is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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